SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA : What is the correct rate of interest? At what rate have you taken loan किस रेट पर आपने लिया है यह बताइए।

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA: Three supplementaries were asked in one question. I have answered two. About bank interest, the rate varies with the contracts entered into with foreign countries.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramdas Agarwal. (*Interruptions*). Please let us not make it into a Zero Hour. Let us treat it as a Question Hour.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : महोदया, कोल का प्रोडक्शन इंडिया में बढ़ा यह संतोष की बात है। लेकिन मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि राजस्थान में लगभग 15 से 20 वर्ष पहले से लिगनाइट के डिपाजिट्स का बड़ा भंडार मिला था। लेकिन मैं समझता हूं कि अभी तक वहां पर किसी प्रकार की परियोजना बनाने का भी आयोजन नहीं हुआ है।

उपसभापति : कोल से संबंधित सवाल पूछिए।

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : महोदया, यह कोल से ही संबंधित है और महोदया, इन्होंने 13 परियोजनाएं दी हैं, लेकिन राजस्थान की कोई परियोजना अभी बनायी नहीं गयी है। यह मेरा मूल-प्रश्न होगा आखिर लिग्नाइट "बी" इतने बड़े डिपाजिट्स में है और इतने पिछड़े क्षेत्र में है जहां पर कि हजारों लोगों को रोजगार मिल सकता था तो लिग्नाइट के प्रोडक्शन के लिए आपने कोई परियोजना बनाने का कष्ट क्यों नहीं किया? वहां पर नेवेली लिग्नाइट ने कांट्रेक्ट कर लिया था पिछले वर्ष, लेकिन उसके बावजूद उन्होंने उसमें एक कदम भी आगे क्यों नहीं बढ़ाया, कृपया कर के इसका उत्तर दें?

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA : Madam, this does not arise out of this question. However, as I know the answer to the hon. Member's question, I am answering it. Lignite has been found in Rajasthan. Now the question is whether the Government will run it from here in the same manner as the Neyveli Lignite Corporation in Tamil Nadu or give it to the Statement Government to start a company. This negotiation is going on. It appears that if we give it to the State Government to start a company with the expertise of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation, then it will be helpful. We have not yet finalized it.

*42. [*The Questioner* (*Shri Ghufran Azam*) *was absent. For answer vide col ... infra.*]

Distribution of Food articles through Public Distribution System

*43. **SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :**

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in "The Hindustan Times" dated, Ist September, 1993 under the caption 'PDS network in shambles';

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that there is delay in the distribution of rationed articles and their quality is also sub-standard; and

(c) what effective steps are being taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI A. K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A Statement is being laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. The news items is about the functioning of the Public Distribution System in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.

(b) and (c) The operational responsibility for implementation of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is that of the State Governments and UT Administration.

The Central Governmtnt issues rice and wheat conforming to the specifications laid down by the Government to States/UTs for distribution through the PDS. They are provided opportunity to inspect stocks before actual delivery and may reject such stocks as do not conform to the prescribed quality standards. No major complaint regarding bad quality of rice and wheat issued by the Food Corporation of India to the National Capital Territory of Delhi has been received.

Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation (DSCSC) is entrusted with the task of lifting and transportation of commodities from the godowns of Food Corporation of India and deliver them at the doorsteps of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in Delhi Wheat and rice are supplied to FPSs twice a month and sugar once a month. DSCSC makes all-out efforts to supply commodities within the stiputated time. Complaints regarding poor quality or substandard quality of foodgrains can be lodged by FPSs owners within 72 hours of delivery and after investigation and checking, the bags are replaced if necessary. In Delhi, FPS holders are also given permission to inspect stocks of foodgrains at the FCI godowns. Vigilance Committee consisting of food card holders have also been constituted at FPS level to oversee the functioning of these shops. In a massive operation of this magnitude, a few short-comings, here and there, cannot altogether be ruled out. However, State Governments and UT Administrations including National Capital Territory of Delhi regularly undertake supervision and surprise visits to ensure proper functioning of the PDS. They also take action under the Essential Commodities Act to check malpractices.

Meetings were also held to review the functioning of PDS in National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.

श्री कृष्णलाल शर्मा : उपसभापति महोदया, मंत्री महोदया ने जो अपना वक्तव्य दिया है, उसमें मेरे प्रश्न के उत्तर में उन्होंने यह कहा है कि पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन सिस्टम की जिम्मेदारी स्टेट्स गवर्नमेंट्स और यूनियन टेरिटरी एडमीनिस्ट्रेशन पर है। मेरे ख्याल में मंत्री महोदय अच्छी तरह जानते होंगे कि दिल्ली यूनियन टेरिटरी कई वर्षों से सीधे तौर पर उनके केन्द्र के शासन में है, वहां गवर्नर रूल रहा है और इसलिए उनको पूरी जानकारी होनी चाहिए और उस संबंध में उनको पूरा स्टेटमेंट देना चाहिए।

महोदया, मैं अपना पूरक प्रश्न यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि दिल्ली में जो पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन सिस्टम के यूनिट्स हैं, उनके लिए जितना आवश्यक राशन है, चाहे वह ह्वीट का है, सुगर का है, कीरोसिन ऑइल का है और चाहे राइस का है—हरेक यूनिट के लिए जितना आवश्यक राशन है, क्या वह इस वर्ष भर में उनकी आवश्यकता के अनुसार दिया गया है और जितना उनको एलोकेट हुआ वह आवश्यकता के मुताबिक था और क्या उन्होंने वह पूरा लिफ्ट किया ? इन दोनों बातों के संबंध में मंत्री जी मेरे पहले पूरक प्रश्न का उत्तर दें फिर मैं दूसरा पूरक प्रश्न करूंगा।

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Madam, the responsibility for the distribution of PDS articles to ration card holders is entirely with the State Governments and Union Territory Governments. The Central Government procures and distributes, in bulk, PDS articles like rice, wheat, sugar, imported edible oil and kerosene to the State Governments and Union Territory Governments. Regarding Delhi, the Central Government is giving topmost priority in the distribution of these PDS articles. In fact, even though we are allotting a higher quantity to the Union Territory of Delhi, the lifting is very poor compared to the allotment. For instance, in January, even though we had allotted 72,000 tonnes of wheat, the lifting was only 60,000 tonnes. Likewise, in February the allotment was 72,000 tonnes whereas the lifting was only 44,000 tonnes. In March the allotment is 72,000 and the lifting is 38,000. In April the allotment is 72,000 and the lifting is 33,000. This is about wheat. About rice also, similarly, even though the allotment in January was 20,000, the lifting was only 12,000. In February the allotment was 20,000, and the lifting was 8,000. That

way, for the last six months the allotment has been very high, and the lifting has been very poor. It means that the Central Government is allotting the maximum quantities of rice and wheat to the Delhi Administration, but the lifting is very poor because ration-shop owners are not lifting the required quantities. The reason is that the lifting is very poor. The Central Government is not responsible for this. We are giving the topmost priority to Delhi. We are giving the maximum quantities of rice, wheat, sugar and kerosene to Delhi compared to many other States.

श्री कृष्णलाल शर्मा : मंत्री महोदय ने यह स्वीकार किया है कि यद्यपि केन्द्रीय सरकार की तरफ से राशन काफी मात्रा में दिया जा रहा है किन्तु पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन सिस्टम के लिए जो एजेंसीज फेयर प्राइस शॉप्स हैं वे कम उसमें से उठा रही हैं। अब इसमें से जो शिकायत है, शिकायत तो यह है कि लोगों को क्योंकि अच्छी क्वालिटी का राशन नहीं मिल रहा है, समय पर राशन नहीं मिल रहा है, और डिलेएड मिलता है और इसकी वजह से लोगों के अंदर जो निराशा है, लोग इन फेयर प्राइस शॉप्स की तरफ से डिस्इल्यूशन हो रहे हैं। क्या कोई गवर्नमेंट इस तरह की कोई इन्क्वायरी इस बारे में कर रही है कि जो इस तरह का एक एटमसफेयर बन रहा है और लोग यह सोचते हैं अब जैसे मेरे पास फिगर्स हैं कि उनको एलोकेट होना चाहिए था 3600 क्विंटल शुगर का 1992 में उनको एलोकेट हुआ उनके लिए नैसेस्टी थी चार हजार क्विंटल और एलोकेट 3600 क्विंटल हुआ, 400 क्विंटल पहले ही कम दिया और आप कह रहे हैं कि वे कम उठा रहे हैं ? मेरे पास यह 1992 की फिगर्स हैं। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या गवर्नमेंट इस बारे में इन्होंने कोई सिस्टम बनाया है कि यह जो फाल है कि लोग जितनी मात्रा में आप देना चाहते हैं वे लिफ्ट नहीं कर रहे हैं, क्या यह जो उनके फेयर प्राइस शॉप्स पर जो कस्टमर्स हैं या जिनको राशन कार्ड दिए हैं, क्या वे निराश हुए हैं ? उनकी कोई कंप्लेंट्स हैं ? उन कंप्लेंट्स पर विचार करते हुए हम कोई कमेटी बना रहे हैं, जो इस सिस्टम को फिर से और रीवैम करने के लिए कोई स्टैप्स उठाए ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As I have stated earlier, the operational responsibility for issue of ration cards and eligibility, all these things, rests entirely with the State Governments and the Union Territories. As far as the Central Government is concerned, our responsibility is to allot the required quantities of the PDS commodities to the State Governments. I have already stated that we are giving the maximum quantities of wheat, rice, edible oil, sugar and kerosene to the Delhi Administration. Delhi has got enough number of PDS outlets also. There are nearly 3,437 PDS shops in Delhi. These shops are enough.

Now, the problem is that since the open-market price and the PDS price have been more or less simllar for the last six months-now it has changed—the consumers prefer open-market commodities. When the PDS price and the open-market price are more or less similar, naturally the consumers' option is for open-market commodities. That is why the lifting is poor.

Anyway, now that Delhi has become a State, the entire responsibility for implementation of the PDS in Delhi rests with the new State Government. I think the new State Government will be able to rectify whatever mistakes there are in the implementation of the PDS in Delhi.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : क्या पूरी पावर आप स्टेट गवर्नमेंट को देंगे ?

उपसभापति : बीच में दखल मत दीजिए। I am sorry. Please don't disturb like this during the Question Hour.

श्री कृष्ण लाल शर्मा : महोदया, मेरा प्रश्न था।

उपसभापति : आपके प्रश्न का उन्होंने जवाब दे दिया।

श्री कृष्ण लाल शर्मा : नहीं, मेरा यह प्रश्न था; ....(**व्यवधान**).....

उपसभापति : मैंने सुन लिया। . . . (**व्यवधान**) . . . उन्होंने बराबर जवाब दिया है। . . . . . . (**व्यवधान**) . . .

श्री कृष्ण लाल शर्मा : महोदया . . . (**व्यवधान**) . . . इसका इन्होंने यह बताया कि प्राइसेस सिमिलर हो गई हैं।

Are you thinking of abolishing the system ?

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As far as this Government is concerned there is no question of abolishing the PDS because it is the surest guarantee of food safety to the crores of poor people of this country. So, as long as we are in the Government, there is no question of abolishing the PDS in the country.

SHRI DAVID LEDGER : I am sure that the hon. Minister is aware . . .

उपसभापति : उनको सवाल सुनने दीजिए।

श्री डेविड लेजर : मैं सवाल कर लूं।

उपसभापति : बोलिए।

SHRI DAVID LEDGER: I am sure that the hon. Minister is aware about the unfair practice which is being carried on by the fair price dealers. It is common knowledge that PDS articles often find their way into the hands of blackmarketeers and unscrupulous dealers through middlemen and it is also common knowledge that there is a connivance of the Food and Supplies officials in this country. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any mechanism to stop this unfair practice, whether there is any system of interacting with the State Governments to stop this unfair practice and to ensure that the food items or PDS articles reach the genuine consumers.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As I said earlier, the implementation part of the PDS rests with the State Governments and Union Territories. I agree with the hon. Member that there are complaints of diversion of PDS articles from many parts of the country. Whenever we get any kind of complaints, we are immediately passing them on to the respective State Governments and are requesting them to take stern action on the basis of those complaints. More than that the Central Government has already advised the State Governments that they should set up Vigilance Committees on Panchayat Samiti basis all over the country. Many States have already taken steps in that direction. Moreover, as per the request of all the State Governments, to prevent this kind of malpractice the Central Government has again extended the operation of the Essential Commodities Act for another five years. Now, the State Governments can take strong action under the Essential Commodities Act against those persons who are indulging in malpratices in PDS articles. I agree with the hon. Member that we must be more stern and the State Governments should take stronger steps and show more political will in dealing with this kind of offenders.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : धन्यवाद उपसभापति जी। महोदया, इस प्रश्न के उत्तर में एक बहुत लंबा-चौड़ा वक्तव्य मंत्री जी ने सदन के पटल पर रखा है और उसमें यह दावा किया गया है कि दिल्ली स्टेट सिविल सप्लाईज़ कार्पोरेशन समय पर राशन की दुकान वालों को राशन देती है। बहुत अच्छी क्वालिटी का राशन देती है। सुपरवाइज़री कमेटीज़ बनी हुई हैं विजिलेंस कमेटीज़ बनी हुई हैं, हर तरह की चैकिंग हो रही है और लबो-लुआब इस वक्तव्य का यह है कि यहां-वहां थोड़ी बहुत कमी के अलावा बाकी सब कुछ ठीक-ठाक है। लेकिन आप भी जानती हैं और आप साक्षी होंगी इस बात की कि मंत्री महोदय के इन तमाम दावों के बावजूद धरती पर सच्चाई यह है कि उपभोक्ता इन राशन की दुकानों से बेहद मायूस और दुखी हैं और राशन शॉप्स पर चीजें समय पर मिलती नहीं हैं, कम तौल में मिलती हैं, घटिया क्वालिटी की मिलती हैं, बार-बार डिपो होल्डर्स चक्कर लगवाते हैं, मगर चीजें उनको मिलती नहीं हैं। मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहती हूं क्योंकि मंत्री महोदय बहुत उत्साही मंत्री हैं और वितरण प्रणाली सुधारना चाहते हैं, इसलिए अफसरों के द्वारा बनाए गए इस रस्मी जवाब को यहां पढ़ने के बजाए क्या मंत्री महोदय किसी दिन गुप्त वेश में स्वयं इन राशन की

दुकानों की सच्चाई जानने का प्रयत्न करेंगे और उसके बाद जब वह सच्चाई से परिचित हो जाएंगे तो वाकई इस प्रणाली को सुधारने के लिए कोई ठोस कदम उठाने का प्रयत्न करेंगे ? यदि वह ऐसा करेंगे तो मुझे बहुत खुशी होगी। इसलिए मैं चाहूंगी कि वह इस सदन में इस बात का जवाब दें ? सधन्यवाद।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The gist of it is: would you like to go in disguise to the shops to find out the calpratices. If you do so, she will be very happy.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : Actually I am already doing it like this.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: If you had done that this reply would not have been there. This is a totally official reply.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : O. K. Let him answer now.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : I have already visited like this twice in Delhi. I have visited the godowns and fair-price shops. After visiting these places I also found some mistakes. I immediately conveyed them to the LG as well as to the Delhi Administration officials that they should take strong action against certain persons who are indulging in these kinds of mischiefs. I had visited other States also. As I stated earlier, this is a joint operation between Central Government and the State Governments. The responsibility of the Central Government is procurement, storage and distribution of PDS articles to the State Governments. The entire responsibility of implementation is vested with the State Governments. I can answer on the floor of the House only on the basis of the information provided by the State Governments and Union Territories. I cannot supply any information on my own. Whatever information I am giving here is on the basis of information provided to us by State Governments and Union Territories. Regarding Delhi also, the information I am giving is not from our side but from the administration of the Union Territory of Delhi.

As I said earlier—this should not be taken in a different sense, in a negative sense—now that a popular Government has come to power in Delhi. I hope they will see that this kind of malpractices are totally eliminated. The Central Government will give total support to the Delhi Government to check these malpractices. That much I can assure you.

SHRI ASHOK MITRA : Madam Deputy Chairman, there is a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction over the uneveness of the quality of grains that is supplied to different States. Some States feel that they are geting the worse end of the stick, notion is being fastered that the farthest you are from the nation's capital, the worst will be the quality of grains that will be distributed to you. I would humbly ask the hon. Minister if he could do something to remove the feeling. It is not good for national integration.

SHRI A. K. ANTONY : As far as the Central Government is concerned, we are particular that there should not be any discrimination against any State with regard to distribution of PDS articles of quality and quantity, But there are complaints always coming from major States. Now complaints are coming from Delhi, the national capital. Whenever we are getting complaints about quality and quantity of grains from various States or from the public at large, we convey it to the officers concerned or the persons concerned immediately. We are always trying to improve the quality. There is a serious attempt going on to improve the quality. I think we will be able to improve the quality of grains further.

TH DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Q. No. 44. ... *(Interruptions)* ... Please take your seat. I have gone to the next question. This is Question Hour.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY : Madam, I am requesting ... *(Interruptions)* ...

आयात और निर्यात

*44. श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल : क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) वर्ष 1992-93 के दौरान कुल कितनी राशि का आयात हुआ, और